

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: INDIANA	
COUNTY: NOBLE	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME	
COMMON: Gene Stratton Porter State Memorial	
AND/OR HISTORIC: "The Cabin in Wildflower Woods"	

2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: R. R. #1			
CITY OR TOWN: Rome City			
STATE Indiana	CODE 4225	COUNTY: Noble	CODE 113

3. CLASSIFICATION			
CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY	
OWNER'S NAME: State of Indiana, Dept. of Natural Resources, Div. of Museums & Memorials	
STREET AND NUMBER: 202 N. Alabama St.	
CITY OR TOWN: Indianapolis	STATE: Indiana CODE 18

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION	
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Noble County Court Hous	
STREET AND NUMBER: _____	
CITY OR TOWN: Albion	STATE: Indiana CODE 60

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS	
TITLE OF SURVEY: Indiana Historic Preservation Survey and Plan	
DATE OF SURVEY: <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local	
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Department of Natural Resources	
STREET AND NUMBER: 100 N. Senate, State Office Building	
CITY OR TOWN: Indianapolis	STATE: Indiana CODE 18

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

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## 7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Cabin in Wildflower Woods was designed by Gene Stratton Porter and completed in 1914. It is located in the midst of a primeval woods on the south shore of Sylvan Lake near Rome City, Indiana. It is a two-story, fourteen room house of white cedar logs with a pitched roof. The logs are stained in their natural color, mitered at the corners, and chinked with cement.

The north (front) and the north half of the east walls of the house are fronted with a two-story, L-shaped, stone and log porch. A similar two-story porch runs along the rear (south) of the house. The second stories of both porches are screened and served as sleeping porches during the summer.

A reception hall 12'x16', living room 21'x16', dining room 21'x16', study 17'x18', conservatory, photographic darkroom, bathroom, and kitchen were located on the first floor. In addition to the two sleeping porches, there were seven bedrooms and two bathrooms upstairs.

The entrance hall and dining room are paneled in wild cherry cut from the region, and various local hardwoods were used for the floors and woodwork of the other downstairs rooms. There are built-in, wild-cherry cabinets in the entrance hall and living room and built-in oak cabinets in the study. The upstairs floors are of oak, while the upstairs rooms are trimmed in maple and hard pine.

One of the most outstanding features of the house is the living room fireplace, which contains a number of carved stone Aztec Indian heads which were brought from Mexico by Mr. Porter. There are also fireplaces in the study, living room, and in three of the bedrooms.

The house was originally lighted by gas and heated by gas burners in the fireplaces; After Mrs. Porter left this home permanently in 1919, the bathrooms and kitchen were remodeled, and electric lights were installed (although many of the original gas lighting fixtures were left in place). The important features of the house remain essentially as they were built in 1914.

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## 8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Pre-Columbian☐ 16th Century☐ 18th Century☒ 20th Century☐ 15th Century☐ 17th Century☐ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Aboriginal☐ Education☐ Political☐ Urban Planning☐ Prehistoric☐ Engineering☐ Religion/Phi-☐ Other (Specify)☐ Historic☐ Industry☐ losophy☐ Agriculture☐ Invention☐ Science☒ Architecture☐ Landscape☐ Sculpture☒ Art☐ Architecture☐ Social/Human-☐ Commerce☒ Literature☐ itarian☐ Communications☐ Military☐ Theater☐ Conservation☐ Music☐ Transportation

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Gene Stratton Porter was Indiana's most widely read woman author. She wrote twelve novels, seven nature books, a book for children, two books of poetry, one book of essays, and numerous magazine articles for Outing, Century, Ladies Home Journal, McCalls, and Good Housekeeping. Mrs. Porter is estimated to have had fifty million readers, and her works were translated into seven foreign languages and braille. Three of her novels, Girl of the Limberlost, Michael O'Halloran, and The Harvester were made into motion pictures and were great box-office successes. Mrs. Porter was also a noted naturalist, photographer, and illustrator.

In 1913 the magnificent Limberlost Swamp near Mrs. Porter's home in Geneva had been drained, and she sought another site for her home and work. On the shores of Sylvan Lake, near Geneva, Indiana she discovered a primeval woods where a wide variety of wildflowers, trees, shrubs, and wildlife flourished. Mrs. Porter at once recognized this spot as an excellent location for the continuation of her work as a now famous author and naturalist.

By 1914 the new "cabin" was completed and the Porters moved in. This fourteen room home, designed by Mrs. Porter was very similar to her previous home in Geneva. It was elegant while still blending with its natural surroundings.

The house was surrounded by 150 acres of land, some of it covered by virgin forest. Mrs. Porter left most of the forest untouched, but did plant some 3,000 rare roots, vines, and shrubs throughout the property. She also developed a formal flower garden, orchards, and a small stone pond.

Mrs. Porter continued her prolific writing career in her new home. During her six year residency she published three novels; Michael O'Halloran 1915, A Daughter of the Land 1918, and Her Father's Daughter 1921, one book of nature studies, Homing with the Birds 1919, and one book for children, Morning Face 1919. Here she also continued her work as a photographer and naturalist. In addition, a motion picture of her novel, The Harvester was filmed on location at this home.

For reasons of health Mrs. Porter left Indiana permanently in 1920 and moved to California. She continued to write in California until her death in 1924.

In 1947 the state of Indiana was presented with approximately 13 acres of land containing the "Cabin in Wildflower Woods", the formal flower gardens, orchard, pond, natural glades and virgin woods. Since 1947 the grounds and home have been maintained by the State of Indiana as the Gene Stratton Porter State Memorial.

## 9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Gene Stratton Porter, Author and Novelist, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of State Parks (1969)  
 "State Memorials Honor Gene Stratton Porter" by Joan Schaub  
 Outdoor Indiana Vol. XIV, No. 3; June, 1947 pp. 6 & 7  
 Unpublished Research material in the files of the Division of Museums and Memorials.

## 10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES			
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE			
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds		
NW	0	'	"	0	'	"		
NE	0	'	"	0	'	"		
SE	0	'	"	0	'	"		
SW	0	'	"	0	'	"		

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1.2 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

## 11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Thomas Gross, Memorials Field Officer		
ORGANIZATION: Division of Museums and Memorials	DATE	
STREET AND NUMBER: 202 North Alabama Street		
CITY OR TOWN: Indianapolis	STATE Indiana	CODE 18

## 12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

## NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State ☐ Local ☐

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS